

## **Arizona Government University wins Innovation Award from Council of State Governments**

The Council of State Governments (CSG) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that seeks to foster excellence in state government. To foster the sharing of best practices among the states, CSG conducts annual awards programs in all regions of the country.

Arizona Government University (AZGU) applied for the Innovation Award for the western region. A panel of western state legislators reviewed the applications of the regional finalists and selected Arizona Government University as one of the two award winners. CSG requested that AZGU attend their annual conference, and 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, in Omaha, NE on December 4 - 7 to share the best practices with the other states.

Arizona Government University is a public sector corporate university committed to effective, efficient and excellent training of public employees through common core courses that cross agency lines and enable agencies to meet their employee and business needs. Governor Napolitano's Efficiency Review initiative recognized Arizona Government University as a means to improve the performance of state government and save money.

Governor Napolitano signed Executive Order 2005-06 establishing an Arizona Government University Governing Board. She appointed the Directors of the large agencies to the Board and chartered them with establishing and implementing an AZGU business model and business plan, making state-wide decisions regarding state employee training and development, and overseeing AZGU's operating budget, financial management, and any rate setting.

Other states are very interested in how AZGU is funded, what were the start-up costs, and what equipment, technology and software were used to operate and administer this program. AZGU shared how they established a successful multi-faceted business funding model, how they leveraged technology to support training in virtual work environments and our current travel restrictions as well as innovations they included in their training products and delivery services.

When asked what the key factor to AZGU's success is, Joellyn Pollock, AZGU Director, quickly identifies "the support from the governor and the unwavering leadership in the agencies. The initial change to standardized training is difficult enough, but it also requires ongoing commitment to not allow the agency to revert to old habits and duplications of effort. We are so lucky to have extraordinary leaders in Arizona state government."

## **Arizona Government University Governing Board**

- Bill Bell, Director, ADOA
- John Bogert, Chief of Staff, ADOT
- Mike Branham, Director, ADJC
- January Contreras, Director, DHS
- Gale Garriott, Director, DOR
- Mary Gill, Deputy Director, DES
- Tracy Hannah, Governor's Office
- Tony Rodgers, Director, AHCCCS
- Dora Shiro, Director, ADC
- Roger Vanderpool, Director, DPS